[Games of Chance](#) by [Luddleston](#)

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Summary:

Kaidan's parents are gone for the weekend, so he and his best friends decide to get drunk in the basement. Joker brings up gay chicken. Kaidan gets smooched. Kaidan probably deserved it.

Games of Chance

Author's Note:

JUST GIVE KAIDAN ALL THE KISSES IN THE WORLD. OKAY? OKAY.

Kaidan's first kiss was with his best friend.

That sounded all cute and romantic, until you took into account the fact that Kaidan's best friend was a *dude*, and he wasn't *gay*, at least, he didn't think so. Plus, the kiss was on a dare.

Joker's older cousin had gotten him a couple six-packs of hard cider, and Kaidan's parents were gone for the weekend, so they invited Shepard, and Garrus over to watch some dumb old horror movies and get drunk. Kaidan didn't have alcohol except for a glass of champagne at his family's annual New Year's party, so being tipsy was a rush he didn't quite understand. During the movie, he ended up curled against Shepard's side, his cheek on the warm, soft fabric of Shepard's old T-shirt. When Shepard turned his head to talk to Joker, his chin bumped into Kaidan's forehead.

"No, we should seriously do it," Joker was saying. Kaidan hadn't been paying attention to his suggestion—he'd learned to tune out Joker's endless commentary during movies.

"Do what?" Kaidan asked, lifting his head from Shepard's shoulder.

"Joker says we should play chicken," Shepard said, tipping the bottle of cider he'd been drinking up to his lips again.

"There's no girls here, though," Garrus pointed out.

"So? Gay chicken is totally a thing," Joker said.

"I'm not doing that," Kaidan protested. He'd die of embarrassment if he had to kiss Shepard, and he'd just plain *die* if he had to kiss Joker or Garrus.

Gross.

"Drinking contest. To see who has to, uh. Participate," Garrus proposed. "Whoever finishes their drink last loses."

Joker and Garrus both seemed dead-serious, and Shepard? Shepard was completely determined, his competitive side waking. He was the first one to grab another bottle of cider, and finished off the one he'd been nursing to boot. "Let's go, then," Shepard said, and he counted them down from three.

There was silence for about thirty seconds, then pandemonium when Shepard sneezed in the middle of his drink. He looked so surprised by his own reaction that Kaidan couldn't help but laugh, cider spilling down his chin while he giggled uncontrollably and tried to finish the contest at the same time.

When Kaidan realized he and Shepard had lost, he stopped mid-laugh.

"Dude! This isn't fair," Shepard complained, "the only reason I lost was because I sneezed!"

"Yeah, and I only lost because I was laughing at him," Kaidan interjected.

Joker just shook his head. "Losers, weepers," he proclaimed, then, "you guys gotta go for it."

Kaidan sighed, and glanced at Shepard. Well. If he was going to get stuck playing gay chicken with someone in this group, at least it wasn't Garrus. Shepard's grin was a little sheepish. "Guess we gotta," he said, and leaned in.

They both chickened out at the same time, lips nearly meeting before they both turned their faces to the side to look at Garrus and Joker, pleading for some way out. "Oh, hell no!" Joker crowed, tipping back in the recliner he was curled up in. "You guys can't wimp out on this!"

"We need another form of motivation," Garrus said. "For reinforcement."

Joker snapped his fingers. "Yeah! Okay, whichever one of you loses gets to be target practice for Garrus."

Garrus's grin looked entirely too pleased. "Ooh, yeah, I've been needing some moving targets."

Being behind Garrus's souped-up paintball gun was bad enough when you could fight back. Kaidan didn't want to be on the other end of the trigger without a weapon of his own. And Shepard *was* pretty drunk—if anything happened, they could just play it off the next day. Plus, Shepard was leaning in.

"I'm not gonna lose to you, Kaidan," Shepard said, and Kaidan breathed in a little too sharply, inclining his head toward Shepard's. Their foreheads bumped a little too hard, and Kaidan hissed through his teeth. Shepard made no indication that it hurt (thick skull), and he kissed Kaidan's cheek, probably hoping that it would get Kaidan to pull back and lose the game. Kaidan did no such thing.

He had a secret weapon.

He actually *wanted* to kiss Shepard. He'd wanted to kiss Shepard for months, ever since he spent the night that one time and Kaidan woke up with his face about two inches away from Shepard's. He put a lot of effort into pretending he didn't want to kiss Shepard, and now? Now, they were drifting closer and closer, eyes darting between each other's features, waiting for one of them to back out. Kaidan almost hoped it would be Shepard; at least then, their first kiss wouldn't take place under the watchful eyes of Garrus and Joker.

But then, their first kiss might not take place at all.

Kaidan locked eyes with Shepard just once more before closing his and leaning in, trying to let Shepard make the first move.

He actually felt Shepard's tongue flick out to lick his lips before the kiss, and his hands curled into fists on his knees, just over the part where his sweaty palms had left little damp spots. Shepard's kiss was just a tentative

press, lips barely pursed. His knee brushed against Shepard's and he tilted his head just enough to really sink into it. Shepard's lips were thin and his mouth was warm, and there was a little patch of stubble he'd missed on his chin the last time he'd shaved.

Kaidan's hands itched to take Shepard's, but he knew he couldn't. In the background, he heard a thunk as Joker dropped the beer bottle he'd been holding. Shepard made a soft little sound when he sucked on Kaidan's bottom lip, and for a minute, it was just them, no distractions. No worry that Joker had spilled beer on the carpet, no crawling realization that they were under Garrus's watchful gaze. Kaidan pressed harder against Shepard and then leaned back, then repeated the action, their lips smacking together a little. It sounded loud, but maybe Kaidan's mind had just blocked out everything except Shepard's mouth. Shepard's other knee bumped against Kaidan's now, like he was shifting ever so steadily closer to Kaidan.

Just when Kaidan was beginning to wonder whether it was ever going to end, he heard Joker clear his throat. "That's. Um. Guys."

Shepard pulled away with an unusually *wet* sound. "What?" he asked Joker, like he was completely unfazed. Kaidan wasn't sure he would've been able to say anything without sounding completely breathless. His heart was still pounding out of control.

"I think you've both gone past the point of becoming target practice," Garrus said.

Kaidan was tipsy. He was tipsy, and he wanted to grab Shepard's face and kiss him again, kiss him hard enough to push him backward, long enough to… to…

"Yeah, well. Blame Joker," Shepard said. He grinned at Kaidan like he was apologizing. "Sorry, dude" he said, and he really *was* apologizing.

Kaidan just nodded, because he still couldn't say anything. He could feel the heat in his face and down his chest and *everywhere,* and it might've been the buzz, but it also might've been Shepard.

He daydreamed for a minute that later, after Joker conked out in his armchair and Garrus was stretched out and snoring on a sleeping bag on the floor, Shepard would kiss him again, take his hands this time, maybe lean back on the couch with Kaidan in his arms. Maybe Kaidan would wake up the next morning with a hickey, maybe Joker would make fun of him for it but he wouldn't care.

Shepard didn't kiss him again.

They were laying on the sleeping bags that they'd rolled out earlier in the night, Kaidan on his side facing Shepard, and Shepard on his back. Kaidan wanted to say something, anything, but he couldn't tell if Shepard was awake. He tried to even his breaths out, to make them match Shepard's.

When Shepard rolled onto his side to face Kaidan, he realized Shepard was awake. "Hey," he whispered.

"Hey," Kaidan replied.

"Um, I should have told Joker to stop, I'm sorry," Shepard said. "I know that was your first kiss."

Kaidan shrugged. "It's okay. I mean… I'm glad it was with someone I'm friends with. Less, um. Nerve-wracking," he said. It was a lie, a complete lie.

"That's good." Shepard breathed a sigh of relief. "I think, um…" he paused, and glanced down, away from Kaidan, before looking back up. "Never mind."

"What?" Kaidan asked.

"I just. It's such a gay thing to say," Shepard said.

"Shepard, you literally just made out with me," Kaidan said. "I don't think anything can be too gay."

He could see the white flash of Shepard's grin in the dark. "You have really nice lips," he said, after a pause.

"Oh. Uh, thanks." Kaidan breathed out a rush of nervous laughter.

"I'm gonna. Go to sleep now."

"Yeah, do that."

"'Night, dude."

"Goodnight."

Kaidan dreamed that he woke up with Shepard curled against him, that he kissed him good morning and ran his fingers through Shepard's buzzed hair. He woke up with a frown and Garrus's knee digging in to his back, for some reason. He'd dreamt of waking up next to Shepard before, that was nothing new, but it was frustrating when he discovered Shepard was actually upstairs trying to find the biggest bowl in the kitchen to make cereal.

He did smile a little, though, when he looked at the curve of Shepard's lips and knew his own fit there.

Author's Note:

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